

The amazing thing about STROM THURMOND's eternal youth is not physical, it is mental. This is a man in his long career who could learn new lessons. This is a man who is not ashamed to say: I am not as ignorant as I used to be. This is a man who could admit to changing his mind.

We are in the only profession where people look down on you if you learn something; that somehow you are inconsistent if you thought one way one day and you acquire more information and you change your mind.

The most amazing thing about STROM THURMOND to me is that through all of his public service, from supreme court justice in South Carolina, from superintendent of schools, to general in the Army on D-Day—we all know the story about one of our colleagues going over with President Reagan and saying to STROM he should have been there at Normandy, and STROM said he was there. And he was there when it counted, on June 6, 1944—is that eternal youth, that ability to learn something new, to have a new perspective and to change that makes STROM THURMOND the most remarkable person with whom I have served.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND TERRORISM INSURANCE

Mr. GRAMM. Finally, seeing I have another colleague come to the floor, I want to say something about two issues that are before us that I am frustrated with, as, I am sure, are many of my colleagues. But in both cases, our problem is the power of special interests as pitted against the public interest. We are trying to do a homeland security bill, and it is not easy because to change the way Government does business is to take on a powerful political constituency, the Government employee labor unions. They are organized and they are active. We are all aware that we are having an election next month. Members are being forced to choose between national security and political security, to choose whether we are putting business as usual and work rules negotiated between the Government and unions above protecting the lives of our citizens.

It is frustrating to me that even when people's lives are on the line, powerful special interests can wield the kind of power that the Government employee labor unions have been able to bring to bear on this issue.

I had always thought when we started this debate that when we were talking about protecting the lives of Americans, we were going to give the President the benefit of the doubt. But at least to this point we have not.

A second issue is terrorism insurance. I was with the President yesterday. Many of our colleagues were there. He was talking about \$16 billion of projects, 300,000 construction hard-hat jobs that we were not creating because people were afraid to build high-profile projects because they cannot

buy terrorism insurance. The President has asked us to move forward on a bill.

In October, the House had already acted on the bill and, on a bipartisan basis, Senator DODD, Senator SARBANES, Senator ENZI, and I worked out a compromise which was agreed to by the Treasury that had a compromise on the issue of: Can you sue somebody who is a victim of terrorism for punitive damages?

The President's view is very strong on the subject; that is, when somebody has been the victim of terrorism, it is like someone coming onto a hospital ship to prey on them by filing lawsuits against them. Lawsuits against terrorists is fine, but for victims of terrorism there shouldn't be punitive damages.

We worked out a compromise on a bipartisan basis. But the plaintiff's bar came out against that compromise, and, as a result, we have never been able to do anything from that point on.

Again, it is the case where there is a powerful special interest that is preventing us from promoting the public interest.

I am hopeful in the remaining days of this session—and I believe unless the end point is changed, today is Wednesday, so tomorrow is Thursday; we are probably not going to do a lot of work on Friday or Monday. Then we are planning to adjourn Thursday, or Friday, or Saturday at the latest—if we are ever going to do something on homeland security and terrorism insurance, we had better get on with it.

The amazing thing is that it is apparently going to be very easy for us to pass a resolution giving the President the power to go to war. I support that because I think American security interests are at stake. We can do that because there is no well-organized, powerful political special interest group that supports Saddam Hussein. But we can't do homeland security and we can't do terrorism insurance because there are organized, effective, powerful special interest groups that oppose what we are trying to do. I hope we can overcome that hurdle. I hope in the process we can pass these two important bills.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. EDWARDS). The Senator from Alaska.

TRIBUTE TO SENATOR JESSE HELMS AND SENATOR STROM THURMOND

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I am sorry I could not get the floor earlier. But I assume we are still in morning business, and that I may proceed with reference to a couple of our colleagues who are leaving. I was unavoidably detained in a conference meeting with the House of Representatives on the status of the energy bill.

First, I think it is important as we see our friends depart from this body to talk about what is outstanding in our own minds relative to their contributions. One could go on at great length

relative to the contributions of Senator STROM THURMOND and Senator JESSE HELMS. But one of the things outstanding in my mind is the tours that Senator THURMOND used to give when we had a social event here in the Capitol. Upon the conclusion of the event, he would offer to take at least some of the guests on a night tour of the Capitol, and he would recite instances that occurred 30, 40, 50, and almost 200 years ago relative to the sacred surroundings and the Old Chamber where the Supreme Court originally was here in the Capitol, and reflect humorous stories of who sat where and what their personal traits might be.

Looking back on my 22 years in the Senate, I treasure those moments. My wife Nancy and I often have talked about them. Unfortunately, his health does not allow him to conduct those tours anymore, but for those who were fortunate enough to share a few moments of his humor on those tours, the historical references, his magnificent memory, and the reference to the uniqueness of the Senate, and the outstanding highlights of the various careers of those who have come and gone, it was truly a memorable experience.

Today, we set aside time for Members to comment on Senator HELMS who is also leaving us. Again, it is a matter of individual impressions that Members leave you with.

Without exception, Senator HELMS' comments on this floor back in 1983 stand out in my memory as certainly the most significant, most timely, and most on target references to a frightening situation that occurred. That was the shooting down of the Korean Airlines flight 007, which was shot down by a Soviet Sukhoi 15 fighter jet on September 1, 1983. That flight was on its way from Anchorage, AK, to Seoul, Korea. There were 269 lives lost, including a Congressman, Larry McDonald.

At that time, Senator HELMS and Senator Symms, the former Senator from Idaho, were on another Korean Airlines flight that was in transit in Anchorage the same time as the Korean Airlines flight 007.

I was in the Senate Chamber when Senator HELMS delivered his floor statement on September 15, 1983. There were many who were commenting and making statements, but by far the most moving statement was Senator HELMS'. I am going to take the liberty of quoting a bit of his statement at that time. Let me quote the statement of Senator HELMS as follows:

Mr. HELMS. I was on the Korean airplane that landed in Anchorage for refueling 20 minutes after the ill-fated plane. Both planes were on the ground for more than an hour, meaning that both planes were there together for the better part of an hour. Most of the passengers on both planes went into the terminal.

It so happens that the distinguished Congressman from Georgia, Representative Larry McDonald, did not, or I did not see him. But in the lounge of the terminal I saw one of the most delightful young families